

**FREDERICK COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**  
**October 28, 2014**

**Minutes**

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I. The October 28, 2014 meeting of the Frederick County Human Relations Commission was called to order at 7:00 pm in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor conference room at Winchester Hall, 12 E. Church Street, Frederick, Maryland by Chair Angela Spencer.

An invitation was given to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. The following members were present: Angela Spencer, Tonya Amedon, Jack A. Thomas, David P. Kaye, Felicia Turner, Annette Breiling, Lisa Clark, Oladimeji Ibraheem, Irene Packer-Halsey, Adeyemi Adeoye, Mari Lee and Francisco Alves. FCPS liaison member Kathleen Hartsock was also present.

The following members were absent: Georgia McCauley and Kavonte Duckett.

The following members of the public were present: Anastasia Rosen-Jones.

Vice-Chair Tonya Amedon was assigned to preside over the meeting.

III. Upon motion, the September 30, 2014 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

IV. Officers Reports

**a) Executive Committee**

Angela Spencer reported that the Executive Committee had met this month via email, and thanked all members for their participation in the HRC's public events over the past few months. Angela Spencer also asked members to get ready to work on the upcoming Human Rights Day and Legislative Luncheon in December, and the several events that will take place in the spring of 2015.

**b) Treasurer's Report**

It was reported that available funds are \$4, 409.00.

Several members suggested that purchases not be made in future from Walmart, because they believe it does not treat its employees fairly.

V. Committee Reports

**a) Community Relations Committee**

Lisa Clark reported that letters of appreciation will be sent by Congressman Delaney and Senator Mikulski to each of the students who participated in the recent Naturalization Ceremony at Linganore High School. Lisa Clark said that the school staff members really enjoyed participating and want to host it again next year. Angela Spencer said that thank-you letters will be sent by the HRC to the school, Principal Dave Kehne and all other key participants. Tonya Amedon thanked the HRC and the members of the GRC for their hard work to make the Naturalization Ceremony a great success.

**b) Government Relations Committee**

The HRC Legislative Luncheon will be combined with Human Rights Day, and this event has been rescheduled for Thursday, December 11, 2014 from 11:30 am until 1:30 pm at the Bernard Brown Center. More information will be issued in the next few weeks.

**c) Internal Relations Committee**

David Kaye reported that planning is still underway on a Fair Housing Conference sometime in April 2015 during Fair Housing Month. David Kaye said that the intent is for this event to be aimed at the community, and that he is working with Irene Packer-Halsey to get speakers.

**d) Pangea Festival Committee**

Planning for this event continues, and no firm date has yet been set. While the HRC has expressed interest in scheduling the 2015 Naturalization Ceremony as part of Pangea, if uncertainty about the date continues it could present problems since advance coordination with and approval by USCIS are required.

Tonya Amedon said she felt it would be a good idea to discuss with USCIS how many people would become naturalized citizens at future Naturalization Ceremonies. This year only 30 people were naturalized, which is significantly fewer than in past years. Several members asked if it would be possible to find out from USCIS whether something could be done to include more citizens in future ceremonies, given the cost to the HRC in both money and time.

Everyone expressed tremendous appreciation to Linganore High School for everything that was done. The principal came in on Saturday morning as did Pam Knight.

**VI. New Business**

Several members reported that the HRC's recent efforts to improve its social media profiles have been very successful. The HRC webpage has been added to the other Boards and Commissions on the Frederick County website; photos have been posted on the HRC's Facebook page and the Twitter account is active. HRC minutes are also being posted to its webpage on the county website.

Miles Ward reported that Pat Fleet will be returning to work next week.

Angela Spencer said that the HRC is still interested in receiving training in LGBTQ issues from The Frederick Center.

Angela Spencer also said that the November 25 HRC meeting would be rescheduled for Tuesday, December 2, 2014, at 7 pm in Winchester Hall.

Several members of the IRC said that work is being done to revise the HRC's by-laws.

**VII. HRD Director's Report**

Miles Ward distributed a Fair Housing brochure published by the State of Maryland, and recommended it for review in case the HRC wants to prepare its own brochure in connection with Fair Housing Month in 2015; he also mentioned an upcoming movie being shown at Centro Hispano on the life of Cesar Chavez.

Jack Thomas asked if MAHRA was offering its annual training for human relations commissioners, and it was agreed that details would be sent directly to HRC when they became available. Angela Spencer encouraged all new HRC members to try to attend this training.

**VIII. Announcements**

Angela Spencer encouraged HRC members to volunteer at the Soup Kitchen on Sunday evening, November 16, and in the candlelight prayer walk which follows; and, to wear their HRC name badges when they do.

December 1 is World AIDS Day, and will be marked by a candlelight vigil at Hood College.

The HRC Awards Dinner has been scheduled for Monday, April 13, 2015, at Dutch's Daughter. HRC members were asked to put this on their calendars now so they can be sure to attend.

Annette Breiling said that the City of Frederick will hold a hearing on rezoning the Faith House shelter for moms and kids, on November 10 at 6 pm at City Hall. She encouraged HRC members who feel this is important to attend.

Kathleen Hartsock said that the current assessment of homeless students in the county school system at this point in the school year is approximately 500. This signifies what appears to be an increase, since the total for the entire last school year (Aug. – June) was around 800.

Discussion was held about changing the date for the upcoming Executive Committee from November 11 (Veterans Day) to another day that week. Details will be announced later.

Events to be held in connection with the upcoming Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Day of Service in January 2015 include the annual Frederick County Public Schools program at Gov. Thomas Johnson High School at 7 pm on January 15, and service activities on January 19. More details about service activities will be forthcoming. A Beloved Community potluck will also be held on January 19.

Jack Thomas asked what the HRC could do to better inform people of their options under the Affordable Care Act. Lisa Clark said that the Asian American Center of Frederick is being very active in this regard. Angela Spencer suggested that health care information could be distributed by the NACs. Angela Spencer asked Tonya Amedon if the Housing Authority had distributed health care information to the tenants and residents in its facilities. Tonya Amedon said that Elizabeth Chung could be asked about this. General discussion ensued about how the Affordable Care Act enrollment process works.

David Kaye will be speaking at an upcoming National Cancer Society function in November.

Angela Spencer said that she heard from Rosario Garcia Alston, who works with the Frederick Police Department's Domestic Violence Victims Unit. Her mother recently died, and when Rosario went to her house she saw that her mother had proudly posted on the wall her official letter from the President of the United States, and her Naturalized Citizenship Certificate. She passed this information along to Angela and expressed her appreciation for all of the work that the HRC does for its annual Naturalization Ceremony.

IX. Upon conclusion of business and discussion the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by the Human Relations Department.

**DECEMBER 2014 HRC MEETING**

The next monthly meeting of the HRC will take place on Tuesday, December 2, 2014, at 7:00 p.m., at Winchester Hall, 12 East Church Street, Frederick, MD., in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor conference room.

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The public is always invited to attend HRC monthly meetings. Individuals requiring special accommodations are requested to contact Miles Ward, Frederick County Human Relations Department at (301) 600-1110, or dial 711 for Maryland Relay Services to make arrangements, no later than three (3) working days prior to the meeting.